

## DECISION SUMMARY



**Date considered:** 07 April 2025

### **Sentence**

1. The offender is serving an indeterminate sentence, of which the minimum term in custody was 20 years.

### **Test for release**

2. Before it could direct release, the panel had to be satisfied that it is no longer necessary for the protection of the public that the offender should be confined.

### **Decision**

3. The panel was satisfied on this matter, and directed release subject to licence conditions.

### **Reasons for decision**

4. In reaching its decision, the panel considered:
  - a) the circumstances of the index offence, and any offending history;
  - b) formal risk assessments prepared on the offender;
  - c) the offender's conduct since sentence, and intentions if released;
  - d) all relevant information in the dossier; and
  - e) the evidence heard at the hearing.
5. The offender was convicted of committing murder at the age of 22. Although the offender had a limited record of offending at the time, they have clearly demonstrated they are capable of causing the most significant harm to a completely innocent member of the community. Their behaviour in the earlier stages of their life sentence was indicative of an individual not willing to engage with authority at that time.
6. The offender has now spent over 22 years in prison, having received a life sentence with a punishment period of 20 years. Since 2017 the evidence before the panel is of a significant turnaround in the offender's attitude, behaviour and engagement with rehabilitation. They transferred to the National Top End at HMP Greenock in 2021 and subsequently moved to the Open Estate at HMP Castle Huntly in 2024. They have undertaken a considerable amount of community access in these two establishments with positive reports from work placements and their allocated social workers from their home leave periods.
7. The panel heard evidence from the offender's community and prison based social workers who support their release on licence. The panel considered the evidence of the social workers as considered, balanced and persuasive in support of their recommendations. The panel also heard evidence from the offender and

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considered their level of insight into their risk factors and the thoughtful plans they have made for their release. They have engaged well with offence focused work and their post programme report outlines the progress made against some of the identified needs.

8. Having considered the evidence in the dossier and that heard at the oral hearing, the panel agrees with the recommendations of both social workers. Taking into account the offender's compliance with temporary licence conditions whilst subject to lengthy and sustained community access and the robust risk management plan proposed for their release, the panel is satisfied that it is no longer necessary for the protection of the public that the offender remains confined. Their release is accordingly directed.

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